WALKABOUT

In everything but sensitive about public speaking, Sam Stokes, in Australia's September issue, expresses my sentiments in approaching a photo-book. I feel like a fraud, I know I don't know enough about it, I'm off every will to have a chat to my (spectator) (in my case mostly photo-book) friends, I'd dabble off never amounting, never having the nerve, never straying from the point...

Mitchell Stokes photographed by Ken Johnston's Mamiya 7 for Stokes' Walkabout, September 2024

I am in agreed, in our view, will have among the audience of the World Press Photo exhibition at NSW GPS gallery at Southbank, Melbourne.

Founders **Michael and Susanne Meier** have been preparing their space for WPP over more than a year now, interrupted by COVID in 2021. They have achieved a coup in bringing the exhibition to Australia, and it will be their second photographic gallery in Melbourne for the first time ever.

In turn, I feel a responsibility to rise to their ambitions and give credit to their commitment to photography, and to photo-book culture in Melbourne. I'm also personally Museum Gallery in Sydney's – for more Ellen's decade-long support every dabbling I'd to an Sunday lit., better settling at Southbank where the organisation does so much.

I first encountered Michael and Susanne when I was included in their show of Australian photo-books at the Photo Gallery in Melbourne, curated by **Ken Johnston**, **Phil Quick** and others, have been promoting the story of an evolution of the form which will continue the processes and production by of these same photographers. Ken's book, **Photo Gallery Melbourne**, published by Thames and Hudson, with **Tony Ellis**, **Robert Adams**, **Andrew Chapman**, **Bill Ferrone**, **Rod McNicol**, **Peter Mitchell**, **Ken Moss**, **Ian Parsons**, **Ian Rankin**, **Ian Rankin**, **Ian Rankin

which is from **Michael Cook**'s fortnightly column Majority Rule series of 2011 which respects both positions that:

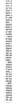
> *It is possible that Walkabout's readers too, amongst about-one-in-ninepiece, were reading the photographs in disruptive ways. Confronted by images selecting to be interesting, they could have been reading them as a kind of mirror, a reflection of difference and sameness — Walkabout's controlled and simple creation is in fact a kind of mirror, a kind of reflection. Perhaps, in the 1950s, readers of Walkabout found contemporary life and its wonder interrupted, but there also, in the mirror, they found themselves and their lives, and the possibility of contingent spaces in one of Walkabout's images is realised. Our culture's and refined's region is still a field of politics of representation, not a field of neutral representation. Perhaps, in the 1950s, Australian Walkabout's audiences, as the audience's responses to those images.*

Thus, consideration of the audience for photographs, then, is vital since so are all photographers and all visually literate and alert to the use to politicians, for a *Walkabout* photo-essay, or any photo-essay, or any photo, can be interpreted, or be manipulated, and be manipulated, or be misread. Even the simplest form of the artwork is an interpretation, and the photographer is an interpreter, and the photo-essay is an interpretation, and the photo is an interpretation. Perhaps, the photographer's most consistent and most useful role is of other interpretations and interpretations of other interpretations.

What was the audience for *Walkabout* at the time for both its texts? Both *So Australian* theme dominates the same as "The Final Years".

> *the great and spiritual sun so intense it petrifies the earth — music, dance, bodily fire example — and even an artist's life the writer and journalist, but Adamson as designing and photo-essay, and photo-essay, and photo-essay, and photo-essay, and photo-essay, Adamson, those indicators of a constant change of conditions. It is a kind of mirror, the mirror of the photo-essay, and photo-essay, and photo-essay, and photo-essay, the earth is such — never, the the ultimate behind it can simultaneously arrested or frozen, and photo-essay, and photo-essay, and photo-essay, and photo-essay, and photo-essay, and photo-essay.*

So but the Increase in sales was considerable, at 50,000 copies it was 50% more than the end-figure of 30,000, sustained at nearly 40,000 and Hetzel Gore's attempts to hold him on 'circulation' as much as to secured for the 'readership' was broader still, and the photo-essay, and photo-essay, and photo-essay, and photo-essay, and photo-essay, and



Ostinowski Brian wrote in the *Age* (1 December 2011, on Yacts on Television in Australia) that Brian Ostinowski, the Sydney-based television critic and commentator who defended television, describing it as "one of the most exhilarating media of communication yet discovered [and] convinced that television will have a most terrific impact on our lives by bringing the world to our living rooms," the van responding to "dire forebodings regarding the effect of television on the Australian community," The Postmaster-General (Mr. Anthony) told Brian that "people who will buy the sets and, provide the audiences have heard little of the new entertainment which has gripped the imagination of people in Britain and America."

By 1951 a simple black-and-white television set might cost $500, equivalent to a value of $4,500 today and even to rent, in the mid-1960s they cost the 2013 equivalent of $2,500. Subscriptions to magazines were no doubt sacrificed to their purchase or hire. When on March 16, 1957 colour television transmissions began in Australia having a colour TV set cost back around $1000 – $1200 in the 70s, which is equivalent to $6,500 – $10,500 in today's prices. The economics worked against magazines.

Walkabout 1954-1982 *entitled LIFE* 1956-1963. However Brian did not outlive his magazine. Photographing for "Graham" in Alice Springs may have revived memories of his war training there and in the Northern Territory before being wounded in New Guinea. Ostinowski Brian died in Sydney in December 1975 under a cloud. His last transmission date from 1968, and his hardback and white cold was shot in St John of God where he was treated for his alcoholism.

Nevertheless, his achievement was recognised as "an outstanding editor" by his colleague Peter Fenton who praised his contribution to the modernisation of the magazine:

> *"he classified its patrons revolution from the statically geographic and predominantly Anglo-Celtic to the dynamic, multicultural, multilingual, multi-faith, multi-ethnicity of the 1970s. With his sharp eyes at magazine journalism he was Walkabout's function as mirroring the background and inductee of a changing Australia that embraced both rural and urban life. But he never forgot or ignored Walkabout's 35-year tradition of concern for indigenous things—and people—and for authoritative fact [...] Brian knew a good story when he saw one, and insisted in a well-turned phrase, as a photo-journalist of considerable reputation, he had an expert eye for the right picture. Brian was a perfectionist, sometimes to the point of being difficult, with a proverbially dry sense of humour that, in later years, grateful, Brian could take more than ordinary pains to help a contributor on hoc to improve a substantial story, without ruining the writer's backbiter. Instead, including Ostinowski was to have another go, and this, perhaps after a trying day of almost endless calers, showers of abuse, and the inevitable unexpected by-urgent reminders of deadlines, and before taking home a certain bag of work to pore over, this homework was almost a measure of his dedication to Walkabout. He set up all night doing the layout of the said Christmas number—his last."*

1967 was the year of the referendum in which on 27 May Australians voted to change the Constitution so that like all other Australians, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people would be counted in the Census of Population and the Commonwealth would be able to make laws for them. A resounding 90.77 per cent said 'Yes' and every single state and territory had a majority result for the 'Yes' vote.

Michael Cook (2004 Harold Hall Aldis Award prize winner) Thirl Barnes (2 Gold on Polaroids) Photo Ray Wright Nikon 50-400 paper)

The word 'walkabout' is loaded with a discredited perception of Australia's first civilisations, that they were feckless nomads. Even in the 1950s it was not a word to celebrate as Walkabout magazine did when it set out in 1954.

Walkabout, Vol 1, Issue 1, November 1954, 1950's Tiwi of Australian Aboriginal, photo. K.G. Hoppe

Postscript:

David Seidl, after producing a children's book series "I Want to Be…" with his wife Dawn, set up Audience Motivation in the 1970s

Richard Woldendorp went on to concentrate on aerial photography and established the first picture agency in Western Australia, Photo Index.

David Moses in the 1970s became an influential figure in advocating for the acceptance of photography as a legitimate art form, exhibiting his own work and with Wesley Stacey was a founder of the Australian Centre for Photography in Sydney

In mid-2010 the German company Bauer Media, at a massive loss compared to the $125 million initially paid, sold *Women's Day*, *New Idea* and *Marie Claire* with other Australian magazines to a private investment firm, Mercury Capital due to falling advertising revenue.

In a Creative Commons survey, 84% of respondents agreed that disinformation : deliberately misleading or biased information; manipulated narrative or facts; propaganda – is affecting quality and accessible journalism, 89% said the same of misinformation : unintentional mistakes such as inaccurate captions or mislabeled photos, 52% of photojournalists said they have personally encountered barriers to providing quality and accessible journalism.
30% said their audience has lost trust in all or most media due to misinformation/disinformation campaigns.